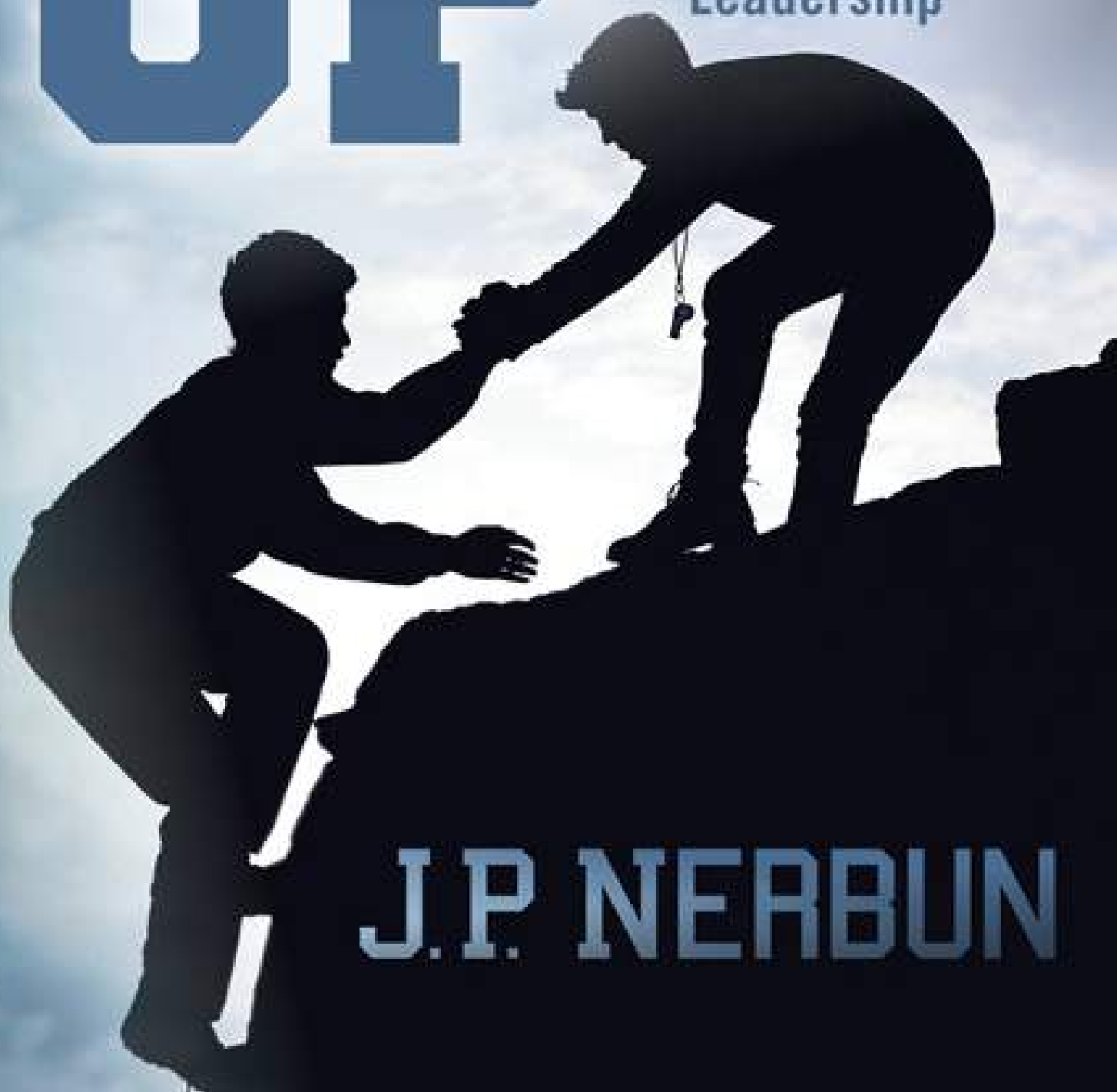


CALLING UP

Discovering
Your Journey to
Transformational
Leadership



J.P. NEARBUN

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CALLING UP COACH'S GUIDE

Coaches don't need more principles and motivation! We need a better system. At the core of "Calling Up" is a variety of strategies, procedures, and behaviors we can implement within our system. Our system for personal development and growth. And our system for culture development and growth.

Below is a guide for implementing that personal and cultural system that you can use simultaneous to reading this book or after reading the book.

Each section below starts with a brief summary of each chapter from the book including key takeaways, followed by a reflection exercise, application of the essential concept outlined in the chapter, and follow up reading that will supplement your coaching development.

Becoming a transformational coach can be a messy process, but this guide should help you put it all together and be a true difference maker on and off the court.

CHAPTER 1

USED BY OUR SPORT

Danny, a disgruntled high school basketball coach has just missed out on the opportunity to take his team to the State Tournament. He doesn't understand what he did wrong; he held his team accountable to high standards and placed an emphasis on big goals. However, the team continued to struggle to meet post-season expectations. But even worse, the relationships with his athletes, their parents, and the administration suffered. Bill, Danny's athletic director, tries to explain that his value comes from who he is as a person, not his accomplishments or failures. Danny doesn't believe Bill and leaves the gym to a barrage of angry and disappointed texts and emails from parents.

REFLECT AND WRITE

What are all the problems, challenges, and issues you face as a coach?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

That which is measured can almost certainly be improved. Starting a daily journal is one of the most powerful ways to track your current behaviors, as well as your goals and progress along the way. You may either buy a physical journal or start one on your computer, smart phone, or Ipad. **Begin by writing down your positive and negative experiences as a coach. For example:**

My favorite experience as a coach is:

My least enjoyable experience as a coach is:

The answers to these two very simple yet important questions should offer you some valuable insight into the journey ahead.

ADDITIONAL READING

Less Than a Minute to Go by Bill Thierfelder

CHAPTER 2

HUNGRY FOR CHANGE

After a difficult loss, Danny decides not to join the other coaches for their usual postgame drink. Instead, he goes to a different bar, and meets a bartender named Auggie. Auggie lends Danny a sympathetic ear. He asks Danny why he started coaching in the first place? Danny replies that it is because he wanted to make a difference in the lives of young people, but he doesn't feel like he is able to anymore. He says that coaching doesn't make him happy anymore. Auggie tells him that is because he spends too much time trying to avoid challenges instead of seeing them as opportunities for growth. Auggie explains the difference between the three different kinds of transformation (Condition, Circumstance, and Being), and tells Danny that he must retrain who he is becoming and build a transformational team.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Classify all your problems, issues, and challenges from Chapter 1 into the three categories of transformational longing: Condition, Circumstances, and Being.

What are some possible solutions to these problems? What are some of the challenges, and how can you overcome them?

The greatest challenges I face as a coach are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Some of the solutions to these challenges might include:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Rome wasn't built in just one day. Thus, it takes time, energy, and incremental steps to create anything that has the power to last. To do so, put a daily reminder into your phone for one commitment you can make to start experiencing a transformation of being. Reading one chapter of this book per day or journaling for five minutes each day are just some ideas you can implement. But consider others. A few daily commitments you might make includes:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ADDITIONAL READING

The Business Secrets of a Trappist Monk by August Turak

CHAPTER 3

PREPARE FOR THE JOURNEY

Danny is at the foot of Clearview Mountain, determined to climb to the top. Principal Richard at his high school suggested his job as Head Coach is in jeopardy, and Danny's wife, Brownie, has suggested that Danny should get away for a few days to clear his head and think things over. Danny has no experience with mountain climbing and soon discovers it is too difficult for him to handle on his own. Upon deciding to quit, he meets an old man named James, who offers to be Danny's guide and help him to reach the top of the mountain. Along their way, James suggested Danny should write down the things he is most grateful for in life, also giving him two books to read in his downtime in the evening.

REFLECT AND WRITE

An attitude of gratitude is extremely important for your growth and development. There are dozens of things from which you can choose. Something as small as a few minutes with your child before bedtime, or a wonderful dinner with your husband or wife. Don't let the little (or big) things pass you by. Take a few minutes and write down some of the things in your life for which you are grateful in your life:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Danny found a mentor along his way to the top of the mountain. Do you have one as you try to set out on your journey? Find a Mentor! Share your commitment to start reading and writing daily with someone you trust. Ask this person to routinely check in with you and just ask how it is going. To get things started, make a short list of some of the most impactful and positive people in your life. Your likely to find a mentor in that bunch:

START READING AND JOURNALING

Start small by committing to reading for two minutes a day. You will be surprised how often two minutes can turn into an hour. Highlight, underline, or take notes in the margins of your book. After you finish the book, copy down these notes into a notebook or journal so you can refer back throughout your journey.

ADDITIONAL READING

Inside-Out Coaching by Joe Ehrmann

CHAPTER 4

CREATE A MISSION

James and Danny start the journey to the top of Clearview Mountain. The going gets extremely tough, and James asks Danny if it is important that he reach the top of the mountain? Danny indicates it is, mostly because he wants to be able to tell others that he did it. James posits that Danny is climbing the mountain for the wrong reasons, and that he should develop a mission, not a goal. Danny decides his mission is to grow in selfknowledge and mental strength. James then challenges him to develop a mission for coaching and gives him another book to read. As the journey becomes more perilous, Danny slips on a rock and hurts his knee.

REFLECT AND WRITE

We have all had good coaches and bad ones. A great coach is someone who motivates you, inspires you, and teaches you to improve as a player and a person. Create a timeline of your sporting experiences. Draw a line from one side of the page to the other. Write down the coaches you have had. If they were positive then put them above the line, but put them below the line if they were negative. The more negative they were, the farther down the page you should put them. The more positive they were, the higher on the page.

Now reflect on where would your players or team put you on their timeline?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Great coaches are team driven and take the time to define a mission for their team. Your mission is a purposeful statement that outlines your specific goals. It essentially answers the question: why do you coach?

Take a shot here. My mission is:

ADDITIONAL READING

Burn Your Goals by Joshua Medcalf and Jamie Gilbert

CHAPTER 5

DEFINE CORE VALUES

James begins by asking Danny what he has learned from his hike up the mountain? He tells him that sometimes, we fail because we have failed to prepare. He likens Danny's lack of preparation in climbing the mountain to his lack of preparation as a coach, and then challenges him to write a list of core values that he would like to develop in his players over time. Danny's core values include "Love Others," "Work Deeply," and "Be Resilient." James tells him that in order to teach his players these values, he must first begin actualizing these values for himself.

REFLECT AND WRITE

As a coach or leader, your core values should remain at the top of your mind to guide your behaviors. Who is the greatest coach you have ever known? What qualities did you admire the most about that specific coach? Write those down here:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Taking note of the qualities you listed above, let's start to consider your own core values. Pause for a moment and consider the most important qualities and characteristics you desire. You should hold these close to your heart, and they should be ever present in the way you live your life. Pick your top three, write these out, and define what they mean to you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SUGGESTED READING

Wooden on Leadership by John Wooden

CHAPTER 6

THRIVE ON CHALLENGES

Danny and James approach a patch of the mountain that is extremely difficult to climb. Halfway up, Danny gets stuck, and declines James's offer for help. Danny slips and falls, leading him to ask James why they can't take an easier path. James explains that sometimes the hard path is what's best for us. He shares it builds strength to take on life's challenges. As the path becomes more perilous, Danny begins to enjoy the challenging climb. James explains that he is developing a growth mindset. A storm begins to gather overhead, and they make camp for the night.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Danny recognized some substantial ups and downs in his coaching career. What are some of your biggest failures? How did they provide an opportunity to learn and grow? List a few of your greatest failures and the corresponding lesson you learned from each:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Most people have either a fixed or growth oriented mindset. Take the Growth Mindset Test at mindsetonline.com to determine if you lean more towards a fixed or growth mindset. Circle the answer here: Fixed or Growth.

SUGGESTED READING

Carol Dweck, Mindset

CHAPTER 7

MAKE COMMITMENTS

James and Danny's journey gets completely rained out. Danny is anxious to continue anyway, but James explains that sometimes the greatest challenge is to be disciplined, patient, and wait for the right moment. Danny realizes that his goal to climb the mountain is blinding him, and that he needs to find happiness in the pursuit, rather than pursuing happiness. James tells Danny to take out his journal and write down what his day would look like if he was 100% committed to becoming the best coach he could be. Then he tells him to write down one thing he can start doing tomorrow, and one thing he can stop doing tomorrow to make this a reality.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Bad habits die hard. But good habits can often start easy. Work to close the gap between who you are and who you want to be with two commitments. What is one thing you can start doing and one thing you can stop doing to close the gap? Write those down:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

On a small sheet of paper or in your journal, write down what you do every minute of your day. If you check your phone, write it down. If you listen to the radio in the car, write it down. We are intentional about what we value. Tracking our use of time helps us to be more self-aware, so we can reflect, refine, and align how we spend our time with our values.

RECOMMENDED READING

Chop Wood, Carry Water by Joshua Medcalf

CHAPTER 8

MAKE COMMITMENTS

James and Danny's journey gets completely rained out. Danny is anxious to continue anyway, but James explains that sometimes the greatest challenge is to be disciplined, patient, and wait for the right moment. Danny realizes that his goal to climb the mountain is blinding him, and that he needs to find happiness in the pursuit, rather than pursuing happiness. James tells Danny to take out his journal and write down what his day would look like if he was 100% committed to becoming the best coach he could be. Then he tells him to write down one thing he can start doing tomorrow, and one thing he can stop doing tomorrow to make this a reality.

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RECOMMENDED READING

Chop Wood, Carry Water by Joshua Medcalf

CHAPTER 9

SURRENDER THE DESTINATION

Snowfall blankets the mountain and obscures the paths. Danny is running out of time to reach the summit. Resources are running out, and he promised his wife he would be back in a week. James explains that they do not need to reach the summit for the journey to have been a fulfilling experience. Danny is afraid people will think he is a failure if he does not reach the top. James encourages him to surrender to the destination and focus on the journey. He explains that there are some things we don't have control over, and we cannot let them overshadow what we can control. Danny realizes that he has to give his maximum effort to climbing the mountain and to coaching his players through the next season, whether or not he reaches the summit or wins the State Championship.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Fear often dictates our behavior and actions. That shouldn't be the case. But if we acknowledge our fears and work to diffuse them, we can start to neutralize their impact on our lives. What are some of your greatest fears and anxieties in coaching? List them here:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Once you are aware of your fears, the next step is to surrender to them. Look at your list of greatest fears and anxieties. Ask yourself, "Will this matter in five years?"

If the answer is "no," then take one step towards something that will matter. For example, if you are anxious about winning your conference championship, you might realize what really matters is the relationships that were built through the experience, so you could organize a team event focused on building relationships outside of practice.

RECOMMENDED READING

Chop Wood, Carry Water by Joshua Medcalf

If the answer is “yes,” then list everything within your control. Take action on one of the controllables. For example, if you are afraid of your players not respecting you, create a list of all the things that leaders do to gain respect. Start by taking action on one of those commitments. List one such controllable below and outline how that will help you to reach your goals:

RECOMMENDED READING

In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day by Mark Batterson

CHAPTER 10

PROCESS > RESULTS

Clearview Mountain's peak is in sight. While focusing on it, Danny slips and falls on the icy path. James explains that his obsession with the result obscured his focus on the process of reaching it. After reaching the summit, Danny notices a taller mountain in the distance, and James explains that there will always be a bigger mountain on the horizon. He likens it to the thrill of how reaching your goals often leads to the desire for more. He explains that one must strive for progress, not perfection. He asks Danny why he does not go by Daniel. He explains that Daniel means "God is my judge," which is a powerful reminder that only God's judgment is the only one that truly matters at the end of life. Danny decides to start going by Daniel from now on. James tells him that before they turn back, Daniel must start to write his coaching manifesto.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Two important questions we should all answer include:

1. What will success look like at the end of my life?
2. What will the world look like after I am dead and gone?

What are your answers?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

We all have the opportunity to define our own success in life. Success means different things to different people. Start to think about what it means to you. Then, write down your definition of success on and off the court:

Man's Search for Meaning by Victor Frankl

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

To this point, we have covered some valuable concepts. Along Daniel's journey, he wrote down many of the answers to the questions posed above. Here is a copy of his responses to help you define your own:

SAMPLE COACHING MANIFESTO

How do you define success?

Success is a mission lived, not a result achieved. It is a mission lived by a process of actualizing my values, principles, and commitments.

Why do you coach?

CHAPTER 10

PROCESS > RESULTS

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My Mission: To help transform boys into virtuous men who will lead with love, leaving the world a better place.

Think of the greatest role model in your life. What 3 qualities do you admire about them most?

MY CORE VALUES

- Loving
- Hardworking
- Resilient

What mantras or sayings help guide your behaviors to be the best version of yourself?

MY COACHING PRINCIPLE

- Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.
- People with a growth mindset don't just seek out challenges; they thrive on challenges.
- When you love the process, the process will love you back.
- Surrender the outcome; control the controllables.
- Love is a choice.
- Once you climb one peak, there will always be another to climb.
- The aim is progress, not perfection.

What disciplines are essential to helping you close the gap from where and who you are to where and who you want to be?

Read

- Books and articles give us access to the greatest mentors and brightest minds.

Study Notes

- Create a well-indexed compilation of research to be the most knowledgeable you can be in your field.

Journal Reflection

- Document stories of your successes, challenges, and failures. Daily activities help us make sense of our experience, identify the opportunities for learning and growth, and train our mindset.

Mentorship

- Build relationships with people of a similar vision that are outside of your circumstances who will give you honest feedback and guidance.

Coaching Manifesto

- Continue to create and edit your coaching manifesto as you learn and grow through the process.

Now let's try to accomplish the same for you. Here you go:

SAMPLE COACHING MANIFESTO

How do you define success?

Why do you coach?

MY MISSION:

Think of the greatest role model in your life. What 3 qualities do you admire about them most?

MY CORE VALUES:

- Loving
- Hardworking
- Resilient

What mantras or sayings help guide your behaviors to be the best version of yourself?

MY COACHING PRINCIPLE

-
-
-
-

What disciplines are essential to helping you close the gap from where and who you are to where and who you want to be?

MY COMMITMENTS

-
-
-
-

CHAPTER 11

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL LEADER

Daniel is upset after the end-of-the-year team banquet because his team parents were ungrateful for all the work he put into making it a memorable occasion, and some are angry that their child did not receive any awards. Later, Daniel comes upon an old man named John who has fallen in the snow while walking near his home. Daniel helps him up and guides him to his apartment. John invites him in for tea and Daniel tells him about the disastrous banquet. John reveals that he used to be a coach and explains that instead of seeking to “fix” the behavior of players and their parents, Daniel must first model good behavior himself, to lead by example. He explains that to do this, Daniel must listen to and learn from their criticism. Daniel asks John if he will be his mentor, and John agrees to do so.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Love is an important aspect of great leadership. Showing emotion and that you care for others can create connection and motivate your team to fight hard for you. Do you model the love and character that you expect from those you lead? If so, jot down how you have done that in the past:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

It is not easy to determine if you are using love to connect with your team. However, creating a Questionnaire in Google Docs or on Survey Monkey to get feedback can offer some valuable insight.

After you compile the replies, separate the compliments from the criticism, and ask yourself this question: “What is it in my behavior that makes them reach this judgment about me?”

SUGGESTED READING

Extreme Ownership by Jocko Willink

CHAPTER 12

OUR LIMITING BELIEFS

Still upset at how the banquet went, Daniel returns to journaling, reflecting, and reading commitments that he made on Clearview Mountain. During this time, John and Daniel decide to visit the aquarium. While watching the Walleyed Pike fish, John comments that the fish could and want to eat the minnows in the tank. But they don't do so because they have been trained to believe they cannot, which limits their power and abilities. He explains that coaches do this, too. John explains that our beliefs impact our actions. In order to keep improving, we must keep asking ourselves how we can better do things. John encourages Daniel to investigate his limiting beliefs.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Limiting beliefs are like steel cages confining your potential. When was the last time you realized it was your perspective that limited your progress? How did this impact your development? Jot down the answers below:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Pick any area of your leadership in which you need growth. Ask yourself, "How can I do this better?" Write down the answer:

SUGGESTED READING

How to Stop the Pain by James Richards

CHAPTER 13

THE IMPACT OF OUR EXPERIENCE

In this chapter, John asks Daniel to describe his own high school coach. Daniel explains that he was too aggressive and made Daniel hate playing basketball. John explains that we coach from our own past experiences of being coached, and that we can choose to repeat those negative experience, or we can choose to let them guide us in a positive direction instead. John encourages Daniel to rewrite his story and stop being a victim of his own past by surrounding himself with a circle of people who will support and challenge him and retraining his default mode of operation. John tells Daniel to remember that just because something is effective does not mean it is beneficial, and that it is important to know the difference.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Insight is everything. Coaches and leaders alike all have their own unique set of leadership traits and abilities. Take a few moments and consider exactly why you coach (or lead) the way you do. Write down your response:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Since it is often our belief system that dictates our behavior, list five specific beliefs you have about coaching. Classify these five beliefs as either beneficial, effective, or neither. Awareness of a belief about coaching that is neither beneficial nor effective is the first step to eliminating it from the way you operate as a coach. From here, you can start to take action to improve as a coach. Pick any area of your leadership in which you need growth. Ask yourself, "How can I do this better?" Write down the answer:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

SUGGESTED READING

Unconditional Parenting by Alfie Kohn

CHAPTER 14

CALLING UP

Daniel walks in on several of his players goofing off in the gym instead of practicing. He tells them they are not welcome to use the gym if they don't improve their work ethic. He doubts that he handled the situation well, so he discusses it with John. John has a friend over named Tony, who tells Daniel that the greatest leaders in the world call people up, not out. The difference is that they encourage those they lead instead of criticizing them. He explains the difference between empathy and apathy—that we must hold people accountable for their actions but understand why they took those actions. John explains that communication is key to become a great leader, and Daniel must communicate with love and be vulnerable.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Inspiration, not criticism, is the best path to motivate your team. Think about the most inspirational leader in your life? How do they call up others? Write down your answer:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

How do you think your coaching style makes your players feel? Take time to contact your former and current players, share your willingness to grow as a leader, and ask them that very powerful question. Write down some of the responses you hear from them:

SUGGESTED READING

The Principle Circle by Jamie Gilbert

CHAPTER 15

VULNERABILITY POWER

Daniel recognizes that he has a strained relationship with two of his players, Kevin and Archie. He asks his wife Brownie how he should try to mend fences. Brownie tells him that he needs to be vulnerable and take ownership for letting the relationship deteriorate. Brownie explains that there is strength and courage in vulnerability. The next day, Daniel meets with Archie and Kevin. He apologizes for his past behavior and explains that he is trying to grow and change as a leader. Kevin thanks him and apologizes in return. Archie coolly accepts Daniel's apology. Later that night, John joins Brownie and Daniel for dinner. Daniel reveals that he learned that sharing your struggles is just as important as modeling your core values, and that he has a new principle: "Lead with your strengths; connect through your weaknesses."

REFLECT AND WRITE

Are you vulnerable? Jot down areas of strength and areas of doubts and weaknesses in coaching.

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Sometimes the best way to show vulnerability is to open up to those around you. Share your experience of personal growth with a few friends, or even the whole world. You may be thinking, “Who cares what I think?” But you would be surprised how many people will connect to and be inspired by your story.

SUGGESTED READING

Daring Greatly by Brene Brown

CHAPTER 16

SEE PEOPLE AS PEOPLE

Daniel and John are stuck in traffic, and Daniel is growing increasingly impatient with the other drivers. He shares his frustrations about the start of summer basketball. He says he doesn't like some of his players' attitudes. John asks if Daniel sees people or objects when he looks at the other cars on the road, and whether Daniel thinks his needs are more important than the needs of others. He tells Daniel to write down the name of every player on his team and the first word that comes to mind when he thinks of each player. He calls this the "heart posture test." Daniel writes a slew of negative words, and John encourages him to retrain his thinking and come up with positive words instead. Daniel realizes that great leaders treat people better than they deserve to be treated.

REFLECT AND WRITE

In your life, do you see people or obstacles? Are you more focused on your needs or the needs of others? It is important to develop an awareness and empathy for others. Jot down a few occasions when you put the needs of another above your own:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Similar to Daniel, jot down the names of each of your team members. Then, write down the first word that comes to mind about each person. Every day, for the next 30 days, write something new and positive about each individual on your team.

SUGGESTED READING

Leadership and Self-Deception by The Arbinger Institute

CHAPTER 17

MODELING THE GREAT COACHES

Daniel has been reading and studying the stories of great leaders. He wonders whether he has been placing enough focus on discipline, accountability, and high standards. During a session with John, he explains to Daniel that advocacy must come before accountability and challenges him to create an action plan for the next three weeks. Then he challenges him to implement one new behavioral change a day to live by his principles.

REFLECT AND WRITE

We all have heroes in our lives. Take a moment to think about your greatest motivators or mentors. Who are some of your heroes or biggest role models? How might you imitate them? Write down at least two names below and at least one quality you'd like to imitate:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Build an action plan to implement small changes within your program over the course of one week. Here is an example of Daniel's:

Sample action plan:

- Every evening, in my journal, write something new and positive about each person on my team.
- Spend at least two minutes greeting every person with a hug, high five, fist bump, or pat on the back. Ask them a question not related to basketball in an effort to get to know and care for the person, not the player.
- Be vulnerable in the smallest ways by asking for help, admitting a mistake, sharing a challenge, making fun of myself, apologizing, or expressing a feeling other than anger.
- Communicate up-close and in-person. When speaking one-on-one with a player, get close to them, look them in the eye, and demonstrate warm body language.

- Meet with every player during the week, only to ask three power questions:
 - a) What do you like the most about our program?
 - b) What do you like the least about our program?
 - c) If you were coach, what would you change?

SUGGESTED READING

Steal Like an Artist by Austin Kleon

CHAPTER 18

ADVOCACY BEFORE ACCOUNTABILITY

In order to promote structure and growth, John encourages Daniel to create boundaries and consequences instead of rules and punishment. John encourages him to create “non-negotiables.” Daniel considers this, and then decides his non-negotiables will include: Be on Time, Always Compete, and Listen to others. John encourages Daniel to help his players self-evaluate their behavior.

REFLECT AND WRITE

We should all carry non-negotiables, which are those core concepts and practices we refuse to sacrifice to question. Think about what that means to you. Then, write down your non-negotiables:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

To help you to build and then reinforce your non-negotiables, subscribe to my podcast “Culture Builders.” Each episode is under five minutes and share a behavior, strategy, or procedure to build your culture and other non-negotiables. Many episodes present real scenarios in which to transformationally discipline.

SUGGESTED READING

No Drama Discipline by Daniel J. Siegel

CHAPTER 19

A NEW MODE OF OPERATING

Daniel decides to lay out his non-negotiables to his team the following Monday. He then completes self-evaluations with Aaron and Archie, who aren't giving their best effort. Archie improves, but Aaron doesn't. Daniel tells Aaron to go home. As the week progresses, Daniel continues to enforce consequences for those who don't live by the non-negotiables. Things begin to get better, and Daniel thanks John for his guidance.

REFLECT AND WRITE

In order to reinforce certain non-negotiables, it is important to outline daily disciplines that align with your Coaching Manifesto (philosophy).

What small daily habits are you committed to developing in order for you to be the best coach you can be? List three of those here (see below for some examples):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

To help you better define your daily disciplines, here is Daniel's:

Read. Reading is one of the most powerful and transformational habits you can build in your life. Here are some tips for incorporating reading into your daily routine:

- Make sure to read for just 15 minutes, or 10 pages a day, of a leadership, coaching, or personal development book.
- Diversify by listening to audiobooks, reading eBooks, and reading physical books.
- Work from a suggested reading list. Feel free to start with the list at the end of this book.

- Devise a system of note-taking. Storing notes electronically is best, so you can go back and search through them easily.
- Reflect on what you read in your journal. You can even share by starting a blog or a book club to discuss what you have learned.
- Do the activities! I know it is tempting to just keep reading, but authors are intentional about the activities they often put at the end of chapters, or at the end of the book. Completing the activities will help immerse you in what you have read.

Journal. Journaling is an incredibly powerful way to reflect, learn, grow, and retrain your mindset. There are so many activities to choose from that have been shared in previous chapters and will be shared in future chapters. Remember to start small—writing for just two minutes to help you build the habit. You can handwrite or use an electronic journal. Try these writing exercises first:

5 MINUTE WRITING REFLECTION (MORNING/EVENING):

- Write down 3 things you are grateful for
- Write down 3 successes from your previous day
- Write down 1 great moment from yesterday
- Write down 1 thing you learned yesterday
- Write down 1 area (either a character trait or virtue) for growth
- Write down 1 thing you can do to grow

DAILY PLAN (MORNING OR EVENING):

This activity is called W.I.N. the day! (What's Important Now?)

- Write down a minute-by-minute schedule for your day
- Write down what you are willing to do and what you are willing to give up to live your mission
- Answer the question: “What do I plan to neglect today?”
- Remember: There is a difference between what is important and what is pressing!

Exercise, Nutrition, Meditation, and Sleep. These areas many coaches seem to completely neglect, which not only impacts their health, but also causes them to fail miserably at setting a positive example for the people they lead. Remember to pay attention to all of these, every single day:

- Get at least 15 minutes of exercise a day. Everyone has their “ideal” time for working out, so follow your instincts (for example, I prefer to work out earlier in the day).
- Fuel your body with the right foods. Don't fall for fad or crash “diets”; instead, commit to a healthy way of eating for life.
- Get a minimum of 6 hours—ideally 7-8 hours— of sleep per night, and plan the time you will go to bed into your schedule to help you stick with it.

Mediation and Prayer. Guided meditation and prayer are one of the essential habits of living a long and healthy life, but they also keep us focused on the essential, and keep us grateful and living in the present.

After reading this take some time to reflect on what you wrote. Can you improve it? Change it? Adjust it? Make sure you outline the best daily routines for you to progress towards your goals.

SUGGESTED READING

The One Year Uncommon Life Daily Challenge by Tony Dungy

CHAPTER 20

BUILD OUR CIRCLE

This chapter takes place during the off-season break, and Daniel shifts his attention from developing his players to developing his assistant coaches. John encourages him to offer a transformative experience to help build trust. Daniel decides to take his coaches on a retreat to Clearview Mountain. To prepare them for the challenges ahead, Daniel provides his coaches with a book to read and a walking program. On the first day of the retreat, Daniel gets to know his coaches better by asking personal questions. They discuss the book they read, and Daniel solicits feedback to improve the program. He shares his Coaching Manifesto and encourages them to create their own. One of the coaches, Mark, shares he thinks winning is more important than building character. Daniel respectfully disagrees, and politely suggests that if Mark cannot get on board, he should find another team to coach.

REFLECT AND WRITE

As we lead teams, we all likely face challenges that will prevent growth and development. Thus, tremendous leaders anticipate these issues and face them head on when they occur. What challenges do you face with a coaching staff or lack of coaching staff? How might you see these as opportunities? Answer below:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

If you feel as if taking a staff retreat could benefit your staff in the same way it benefited Daniel, then consider the following 12 Great Questions for Staff Retreats. This is just to nudge you in the right direction. There are a few blanks at the end for you to add your own:

1. Why do you coach?
2. Why do you coach the way you do?
3. How does it feel to be coached by you?
4. How do you define success in coaching?
5. What do we need to stop doing?
6. What do we need to start doing?

7. What do we need to keep doing?
8. What did you enjoy the most about our team?
9. What did you enjoy the least about our team?
10. If you were head coach, what would do differently?
11. What do we want to be great at?
12. What are we okay with not being great at?
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

SUGGESTED READING

The Only Way to Win by Jim Loehr

CHAPTER 21

VALUING OUR VALUES

The chapter begins with Daniel and his assistant coaches watching a middle school basketball game. The star player is undoubtedly talented, but he has a poor attitude. The coaches debate whether they should favor talent over hard work. After the game, Daniel writes a letter to his team discussing tryouts. He explains that he has designed a new selection method compressed into a single weekend to determine who will make the team.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Selecting team members is one of the most important tasks of any leader. If you learn how to best build a team, you can position your collaborative efforts for success. Consider how you have selected players in the past. Then list the traits in order of priority that you have considered most important. Finally, ask yourself if your values are reflected in the players you choose?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

The talent and character equation. Talent and character are both essential skills to consider when choosing a team. Often times we as leaders are willing to sacrifice important qualities like character so long as a team member demonstrates a great deal of talent. But that is inevitably a recipe for disaster. What are you willing to work with? What are you willing to tolerate? What is your breaking point when it comes to exchanging talent for character?

SUGGESTED READING

Moneyball by Michael Lewis

CHAPTER 22

THE SELECTION

Tasked with determining who will make the team, Daniel designs a new selection method compressed into a single weekend. He tests the players through competitive drills, mindfulness breathing, reading together, and cooking their own meals. Finally, the coaches discuss whom to cut, but cannot decide between two players: Scott or Aaron. Aaron is more talented, but Scott displayed a better effort and attitude during tryouts. Despite Mark's protests, they decide to cut Aaron. Mark responds by quitting. Daniel tells Aaron he has been cut and appoints Kevin, Eddie, and Archie as team leaders.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Great leaders make the tough calls, no matter how difficult or unpopular they might be. How (in your role as a leader) can you implement a “selection process” to test your team’s mindset, while also bringing them together and strengthening commitment to the team? Jot down some notes below:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Daniel worked hard to sculpt a selection process that matches his team goals. Some Ideas for a Team Selection Process include:

TEAM READING AND DISCUSSION:

Read articles, blogs, or a book that reinforces the core values and mission of your program. Reading together helps initiate meaningful discussions as a team.

SMALL TEAM TOUGHNESS CONDITIONERS:

This should always be done within teams and should be aimed at pushing your players to their limits mentally, physically, and emotionally.

SMALL GROUP COOKING MEALS:

Break the team into small groups and have them cook for the team during your team retreat.

JERSEY CEREMONY.

Rituals are powerful ways to create a team story. Jersey ceremonies are common rituals on many high-level teams.

PARENT LETTERS TO PLAYERS.

Before the big weekend, ask parents to write their son or daughter a letter of encouragement letting them know that they love them and believe in them.

LEADERSHIP GROUP.

Coaches have a wide array of ways to name team captains. Whichever way you use to select your team captains, ensure that it is more than just a title and that you have high expectations for them.

SUGGESTED READING

Fearless by Eric Blehm

CHAPTER 23

CREATE A SHARED VISION AND PURPOSE

Daniel books a hotel conference room and gathers the new team together. He passes out notebooks and pens to the players, instructing them to discuss why they have succeeded or failed in the past. He then suggests they jot down some thoughts to improve their performance. Daniel then asks each of the team members to draft a mission for the season. The team offers suggestions and then votes on what their mission will be. They select four qualities that they expect to use as values on which to build the program. Then, Daniel asks the team which principles could help them stick to their values, as well as commitments they can make to control the controllables. Finally, as a team, they discuss their definitions of success.

REFLECT AND WRITE

It is important to define the values and qualities of your team just like you'd define team goals. Winning is not enough. Every team should have an identity comprised of core values they hold near and dear to their hearts. Think about those for a moment, then write down the most important values for your team:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Build a "Team Manifesto" with your team on a team retreat. Here are Daniel's notes from his journal:

CREATING COMMITMENTS

What do we need to:

1. Start doing?
2. Stop doing?
3. Keep doing?

How do we apply these questions to aspects we can control and measure in the following areas?

- Before Practice
- During Practice
- After Practice
- Before Games
- During Games
- After Games
- In the Training Room
- In the Locker Room
- In the Classroom
- At Home
- On Social Media
- In Our Nutrition
- In Our Sleep Habits
- During Our Individual Workouts
- During Team Functions
- During Team Meals
- In the Weight Room
- In Our Community

Try doing the same for your team. You can adjust this accordingly to meet your own team needs and identity.

SUGGESTED READING

Until Victory Always by Jim McGuinness

CHAPTER 24

BUILD AN INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED ENVIRONMENT

Daniel finds himself having problems with Archie again. Archie lacks effort and focus, which infects the whole team. Daniel chastises his team for their poor performance, then discovers they don't feel connected to each other. Daniel decides he won't start practice until everyone greets one another. This improves morale, but Archie's performance doesn't, so Daniel asks Archie to leave. After watching the practice videotape, Daniel realizes the players are afraid of failure. He asks them what they need to do well to execute each play. This improves their intensity, but they still lack competitive spirit. Daniel puts up a chart of player rankings in the locker room as a reminder to stay competitive.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Empowering your team to succeed is like putting a plane on autopilot. But you have to work hard to build this trust and position your players to self-start. What steps can you take to offer autonomy to your team? Jot down a few here:

Are your team-members connected to a purpose greater than themselves? If so, what steps did you take to support their growth:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Empowering your team is key. Some of the best ways to motive and inspire them include:

LEVELS OF INSTRUCTION:

Use film, questioning, and creative drills and games to empower athletes in the learning process.

COMPETITIVE CAULDRON.

A competitive cauldron is a system in which competitive practice is reinforced by recording the wins and losses of every player. Create a competitive environment in your practice but be wary of the dangers of promoting a fixed mindset. Explain the why behind the cauldron and don't draw much attention to the rewards or rankings system that you use to reinforce the cauldron.

CREATE A CULTURE WALL.

Decorate your walls with the maxims, core values, mission, principles, and mantras of your program.

SUGGESTED READING

Drive by Daniel Pink

CHAPTER 25

A NEW WAY OF COMMUNICATING

In search of feedback for the communication style during practice, Daniel decides to show the practice videotape to Andy, a communications specialist. Andy carefully reviews both the verbal and non-verbal communication, and encourages Daniel to use intentional language with his players. By that, he suggests that Daniel asks “power questions” during practice, and create “maxims” to put on the locker room walls. In doing so, Daniel can reinforce the positive behaviors he hopes his team exhibits.

REFLECT AND WRITE

A maxim or mantra is a statement or slogan often repeated time and time again. What are your favorite maxims or mantras? Write them out. Which of them best represent the culture you are trying to build?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

In working on his own communication skills, Daniel decided to carefully choose his words and delivery. He created a list of power questions, notifications, and lines in which to create a language for communicating feedback that promotes a growth mindset and a safe environment. You should do the same.

Some keys to remember:

- Avoid false positivity
- Avoid saying “need” or “must”; try saying “try” or “consider” instead
- Avoid saying “stop thinking so much” and instead, say, “try focusing on_____.”
- Avoid saying “natural” or “gifted” and try saying “skilled” instead
- Asking, “What should you have done?” is greater than asking, “Why did you do that?”

SELF-REFLECTION

Film yourself during a practice or a game or record your voice. Break the film or audio down by yourself or with a mentor, analyzing your verbal language and body language.

SUGGESTED READING

Power Questions by Andrew Sobel

CHAPTER 26

WORKING WITH PARENTS

Complaining parents pressure Daniel about his coaching over the course of the previous season. Archie and Dennis then behave poorly during practice, and Daniel asks them to leave. Daniel received an earful from their parents. When Daniel gives Dennis a ride home, he realizes Dennis' home life is a mess. Later, Daniel talks to Brownie about his problems with the parents. Brownie encourages him to get the parents involved in the team mission, so Daniel writes the parents an email inviting them to attend next practice. He asks them to practice along with their kids, and then enjoy a dinner together. He admits that he has been an imperfect coach in the past, but he is committed to changing. He shares his coaching manifesto and encourages them to contribute to creating a transformational culture for the team.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Transformational leadership is the practice of reinventing your team through out of the box thinking and behavior. It isn't always easy to accomplish, but it is a powerful and inclusive way to show you care. Think about how you can help to create a transformational experience for the parents and the loved ones of your team. Jot down your answers below:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Communicating with the parents of your players can be one of the most challenging but important qualities of any coach. Here are some of the best techniques to do just that:

EMAIL PARENTS AFTER A CONFLICT WITH THE PLAYER.

Communicate to both parent and player that this is not about tattletelling, but you will continue to do this to ensure the parent understands what is going on and to prevent any disconnect between the player's story and the truth.

HOLD OFFICE HOURS.

Set a time for parents to come to you with any issues or concerns, which can help protect your time with your family. It establishes healthy boundaries on communication, while still giving them an opportunity to be seen and heard.

WEEKLY EMAIL.

Instead of just giving out the schedule for the week, take this time to share other parenting resources, such as blogs, articles, or videos from some great organizations that can help them become better parents. This is also a great time to be open and vulnerable about challenges or issues you or the team are facing.

PARENTING BOOK CLUB.

Create a book club in which once a week, parents get together to discuss a chapter from a fantastic parenting book. Not only will it help educate them, but it will also help empower them by providing them with a support group for each other.

INVITE PARENTS TO A PRACTICE.

This can just simply be an open practice for them to watch or they can be allowed to participate as well. One great idea is to allow the players to coach their parents! It is a great way to have a healthy, active, and fun time, while giving them an inside perspective on how you coach, as well as the expectations of a typical practice.

FAMILY DINNERS AND GATHERINGS.

Don't just wait until the end-of-the-year banquet! Eat together and spend time together getting to know each other as people. In the UNC Women's Soccer program, Anson Dorrance wanted every game to be a mini "parents' weekend", because he understood the importance of the parents getting to enjoy seeing their child be a part of the program.

INVITE PARENTS INTO THE LOCKER ROOM.

Celebrate a win or allow parents to share in the emotions of a hard loss. Not only will they appreciate the opportunity to be with their kids in these moments, but it is a way for you to model and communicate the post-game message to the parents in a very real way.

MANDATORY OR SUGGESTED PARENTING COURSE.

Many organizations, like growingleaders.com and changingthegame.com, have courses for parents to take that educate them on healthy sports parenting and give them practical ways to support their child.

Even with your best efforts, you might still find yourself battling unhappy parents. When doing so, here are some Power Questions for One-on-One Parent Meetings:

- Why do you want your child to play sports?
- Why did you want your child to play sports when they first started?
- Why have things changed?
- What are your greatest concerns for your child in the next five years?
- Will this really matter in 5 years? (This is a particularly great question to ask when they come to you upset about playing time, losses, or awards.)

SUGGESTED READING

12 Huge Mistakes Parents Can Avoid by Tim Elmore

- GrowthLeaders.com
- ChangingTheGame.com
- Ilovetowatchyouplay.com

CHAPTER 27

BUILD A CULTURE MANUAL

Daniel lays out a plan to keep the team's priorities in check throughout the season. An assistant coach suggests creating a checklist for the team, so they can be responsible for cleaning up after themselves. They implement success logs to keep track of what they did well during each practice and identify areas for growth. To increase competition, Daniel makes the winning team exempt from extra conditioning. To boost focus and develop mental toughness, Daniel implements the method of "A.C.T. (Awareness, Compose, Take Action), don't react." Daniel also asks his coaches to be late to the next practice so the team has run the practice on their own. To teach gratefulness, Daniel encourages players to acknowledge extra effort made by a teammate, and on "Serving Saturdays," the team does community service work.

REFLECT AND WRITE

We should all carry non-negotiables, which are those core concepts and practices we refuse to sacrifice to question. Think about what that means to you. Then, write down your non-negotiables:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Change starts with taking intentional steps in the direction of your goals. What is one small INTENTIONAL step you can take to start training your team on the following:

- Character: _____
- Mental Toughness: _____
- Leadership: _____

Daniel worked hard to implement a thoughtful structure to help his team develop and grow their culture. The stronger the culture, the stronger the team. But culture doesn't happen overnight. It is something you have to nurture and build. Below are some of the disciplines Daniel put in place to help build his team culture:

Sample Post-Practice Team Meeting (15-30 Minutes):

- Success Log
- Team After-Action Review
- Read as a Team and Discuss
- Daily Sharing (see below)
- Chore List and Checklist

Sample Weekly Schedule:

- Sundays: Virtue Training, Guest Speaker, Family Meal, Leadership Group Meeting, and Coaches Meeting
- Open Mic Mondays: Share A Commitment and Bring Up A Culture Issue
- Tough Tuesdays: Share A Struggle
- Wisdom Wednesdays: Life Skills Presentation and Role Playing
- Thankful Thursdays: Gratefulness Meditation and Sharing
- Fun Fridays: Mandatory Family Fun
- Serving Saturdays: Serve Others

SUCCESS LOGS

Ask the following questions:

What three things did I do well today?

Based on today's performance, what do I want to improve?

What is one thing I can do differently that could lead to the desired improvement?

MENTAL TRAINERS:

- It Pays to be a Winner: Navy SEALs Method in which winners are exempt from conditioning.
- Execution Under Exhaustion Drills: Conditioning drills followed by execution of a play, strategy, or skill.
- Toughness Sprint Drills: Last place is out, until one man is left standing.
- A.C.T.:
 - o Awareness of your focus and feelings
 - o Compose yourself by focusing on the controllables
 - o Take action on the controllables

SUGGESTED READING (WITH YOUR TEAM)

Fearless by Eric Blehm

10 Minute Toughness by Jason Selk

Chop Wood, Carry Water by Joshua Medcalf

Hard Hat: 21 Ways to Be A Great Teammate by Jon Gordon

CHAPTER 28

FOCUS ON THE PROCESS

The chapter begins with the first game of the season. Daniel gives the team a motivational pre-game talk and encourages them to love the process. They shout their team mission: “Love work, love play, love each other!” They find themselves down 14-2 just minutes into the game. Daniel eventually loses his cool, chewing the team out in the huddle. After they lose the game, Daniel shouts at the referee and gets suspended for a week and fined \$500. He visits John, who instructed him to record his voice during the game. When they listen to the playback, Daniel realizes he was too emotional and reactionary, and decides to take ownership of his actions and the loss. At the next practice, he apologizes to the team and solicits their feedback on how to do better.

REFLECT AND WRITE

As the team leader, you send a message by how you behave and treat others. What messages does your behavior send to your team-members, colleagues, and the rest of the world around you about your values and your focus? Write down what comes to mind below:

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Want to improve on how you treat your team and respond to adversity? Be accountable and take responsibility. How? Film or Record Yourself During a Game

Go through every comment and action with a fine-toothed comb and ask yourself: “Is this behavior beneficial to me and my team?”

SUGGESTED READING

Mind Gym by Gary Mack

CHAPTER 29

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

The team redesigns their locker room to promote inspiration and create a space where it's safe to fail. During film review, Daniel asks the players to view footage of their next opponent and put together a scouting report. Daniel invites Kevin to deliver the pre-game talk after his first game back from suspension. When they begin to lose, Daniel uses halftime to ask the team what's going wrong and what they can do differently. They improve their performance, and they win the game. To improve his relationship with the opposing teams, Daniel begins to thank the referees, praise the opposing team during interviews, and write each opposing coach a letter thanking them for a good game. When the players begin to complain about their lack of playing time, Daniel meets with them one-on-one to discuss how they can best contribute to the team.

REFLECT AND WRITE

It is crucial not just to understand your team, but also your colleagues and your competition. It not only builds meaningful relationships, but will help you succeed in the long run. Jot down some of your rituals before and after the game. Are your film, scouting and game rituals based on what your players need or what you want?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Game and practice rituals help to define your mantra, and inject culture into your team. Positive practices will almost surely help to implement positive results. Here are a few big picture steps Daniel took to adjust his rituals to meet the needs of his team:

LOCKER ROOM DESIGN.

Create a language surrounding the team and help them to understand every piece.

- Culture Wall: Team Manifesto
- Competitors Wall: Competitive Cauldron Rankings
- Failure Wall: Vulnerability and Growth Mindset
- Tactical Wall: Board for Tactical Talks, AAR, etc.

FILM REVIEW.

For a successful film review, players should each have their own notebooks and should focus on breaking down certain areas of the game. Use the Socratic Method of Questioning by asking a question of the team and calling on someone at random to answer it. This will keep everyone engaged and alert. Be sure to spend the majority of time watching the skill or play done correctly.

SCOUTING.

Along with the coaches' scouting report, assign certain players each a game and have them present their scouting report to the team. Discuss the opposition as a team and ask for their input on the best strategy. Present the strategy you believe is best, being sure to include why you believe it is the best strategy, and then ask, "Can anybody poke any holes in the game plan?"

PRE-GAME TALK.

Players should come up with key points of emphasis. Designate a player to give a pre-game speech. Focus on one small detail to ensure peak performance. Be sure to incorporate breathing, self-talk, and a visualization routine.

SUGGESTED READING

Training Soccer Champions by Anson Dorrance

CHAPTER 30

EMBRACING FEEDBACK

Daniel begins to notice that the team is becoming complacent and not competing hard. In response, Daniel hosts a brainstorming session in which he asks the team to name one thing they need to keep doing, start doing, and stop doing to improve their process. He asks Brownie how he should engage his players during one-on-one meetings. Brownie advises him to ask great questions and then listen. She tells him to let the player lead the conversation and ask them what the next steps should be. Daniel vows to become a question man instead of an answer man.

REFLECT AND WRITE

In the end, the journey is focused on self-growth and developing yourself into a strong and formidable leader. You do that through commitment and discipline. Thus, what are some commitments you can make to help bring more meaning into your conversations with others and to help grow and nurture those relationships? Write down three of them here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

That which is measured can almost certainly be improved. One vitally important aspect of coaching is to empower them to reflect and self-evaluate on their own progress. During a monthly or weekly performance review, each player should document their aspirations and commitments for the month. At the end of the month, they should complete a self-reflection on which of these aspirations were realized and which of these commitments were put into action. Then, they should look at which of their aspirations and commitments were not put into action and answer: Why? What can you do better next month?

PERSONAL REPORT CARD.

Create a report card based on the core values and principles of the program. Players should fill this out weekly or monthly, with a one-paragraph review of their progress. This should include the answers to the following questions: Where did you succeed? Where did you fall short? What more can you do?

PEER EVALUATIONS.

An anonymous peer evaluative feedback process can occasionally be useful within a team. Create a system of collaboration to give peer feedback. While they can often brush off a coach's criticism, few players will brush off criticism from their teammates.

COACHING FEEDBACK.

Create an anonymous questionnaire for team members, asking:

- What are my strengths as a coach?
- What do you believe I am doing that is holding us back?

SUGGESTED READING

Culture Code by Daniel Coyle

CHAPTER 31

EMBRACING THE STRUGGLE

Daniel worries the team won't win the next series of games. A lack of team efforts costs them a game against their rivals. Instead of chewing the team out, Daniel gathers them together and says, "I love every one of you." At the next practice, Daniel asks the team if they think their critics are right about them. The team vehemently disagrees. Despite their conviction, the losing streak continues. To make matters worse, Dennis and Eddie begin failing their classes. Daniel struggles with the decision to make them sit out the next game, but ultimately sticks to his principles. Daniel convinces Eddie's parents that Eddie needs to learn the hard lessons now, and he needs their support. When the losses and mistakes continue, Daniel encourages the team to view each bad practice as an opportunity to build character and give their best, no matter the outcome.

REFLECT AND WRITE

The most challenging times to stay anchored to your values is during adversity, but it is also the most important time as well. Do you model the strength and courage to see challenges and failures as opportunities to learn and grow? If so, what steps do you take to do so?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

As mentioned, adversity will almost often poke its head into your gameplan. When your team experiences these low points, a great response is to read and share stories of famous people who have overcome the same struggles in life. What are some of your favorites? List those here:

SUGGESTED READING

Grit by Angela Duckworth

CHAPTER 32

CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENT, PRAISE THE PROCESS

The team wins the last eight games of the regular season and head to the conference championship. They continue to get 1% better every day, and after they win the championship, Daniel emotionally thanks his team for allowing him to coach them that season. This is the highpoint of the book, as Daniel feels as if all his hard work, dedication, and focus have paid off for his young group of players. But the most rewarding part is to see how this success impacts them.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Don't put your guard down in times of success. Even the highs can offer great learning opportunities. When people achieve, do you praise the process or the result? Focus on celebrating achievement and praising the process. Jot down a few ways you do that:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

Invite your team's parents into the locker room after a big win or a hard loss. Let them have an inside look at your process. This is a great way to indirectly communicate a message the parents may need to hear by speaking to the players with their parents present. If you have any other ideas to generate a better and more inclusive culture, write those down here:

SUGGESTED READING

My Losing Season by Pat Conroy

CHAPTER 33

TRUE SUCCESS

As the team prepares for the state tournament, the Athletic Director tells Daniel the principal won't renew his coaching contract unless the team goes to the state championship game. Although saddened by this, Daniel is determined not to let it ruin the tremendous progress he's made as a coach and a human being. Despite giving their best effort, the team loses in the first round of the state tournament. Daniel then gives his final speech as coach at the end-of-the-year banquet. He tells the team he is proud of them for growing in character and virtue and putting the things that really mattered first. After the principal tells Daniel he won't renew his contract, Daniel meets with John, who asks if he has any regrets. Daniel says he wouldn't change a thing and goes home to his family feeling optimistic about the future.

REFLECT AND WRITE

Even in great success, Daniel falls short of his goals. But he doesn't look at it that way. The journey was sweet, and he learned a lot along the way. Think of one of your greatest failures or setbacks in life. How did it shape you into the person you are today?

What was the greatest lesson you learned from it?

APPLYING THIS CHAPTER

It took Daniel some time to adjust to the bad news, but he prioritized celebrating the success of his team over his own personal struggles. In doing so, he finally demonstrated the type of leadership he always expected out of himself. Some of the steps he took to do so included:

TRANSFORMATIONAL HIGHLIGHT REEL.

Instead of just showing on-the-field highlights, interview your players on camera and ask them to share their positive experiences from the season, what they learned, and how they grew as people.

VIRTUE AWARDS.

Players and coaches should vote for one player who best represented each of the core values of the team. When giving out these awards, members of the leadership team should present each award by first defining the core value and telling a story of how it was actualized within that person throughout the season.

What are some of the best ways you celebrate the accomplishments of your team? Jot those down here:

SUGGESTED READING

The Road Less Traveled by M. Scott Peck

MOVING FORWARD

The journey to Calling Up doesn't end with this book. To continue the conversation, you can review J. P.'s website at thriveonchallenge.com or email him directly at jpnerbun@thriveonchallenge.com. J. P. also offers a number of different touch points, including:

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM:

Need someone to walk with you as you move forward in your journey? Email me for details to set up an initial call.

CONSULTING SERVICES:

My consulting services are customized programs tailored to fit your athletic department, club, or team's unique context. I work with administrators, coaches, athletes, and parents to create a special culture.

WORKSHOPS FOR TEAMS, COACHES, AND PARENTS:

Presentation, discussion, and activities to address your obstacles, provide you with tools, and start practicing the implementation within your system.

KEYNOTE SPEAKING:

We don't need more motivation. We need a clearer purpose and a better process. J. P.'s keynotes offer just that. His authentic, vulnerable, and practical presentation helps audiences engage in the real meaning of Calling Up.

COACHING CULTURE PODCAST:

Short thirty-minute episodes helping coaches on their journeys to become transformational coaches!

CULTURE BUILDERS PODCAST:

Short three-minute episodes giving coaches strategies, procedures, and behaviors to help them build their cultures.

BLOG:

Check out previous articles and subscribe for new articles at thriveonchallenge.com/blog.